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ABSTRACT

This is an extensive bibliography, with some brief annotations, of recent literature describing possible alternatives to the traditional form of American public elementary and secondary education. (JG)

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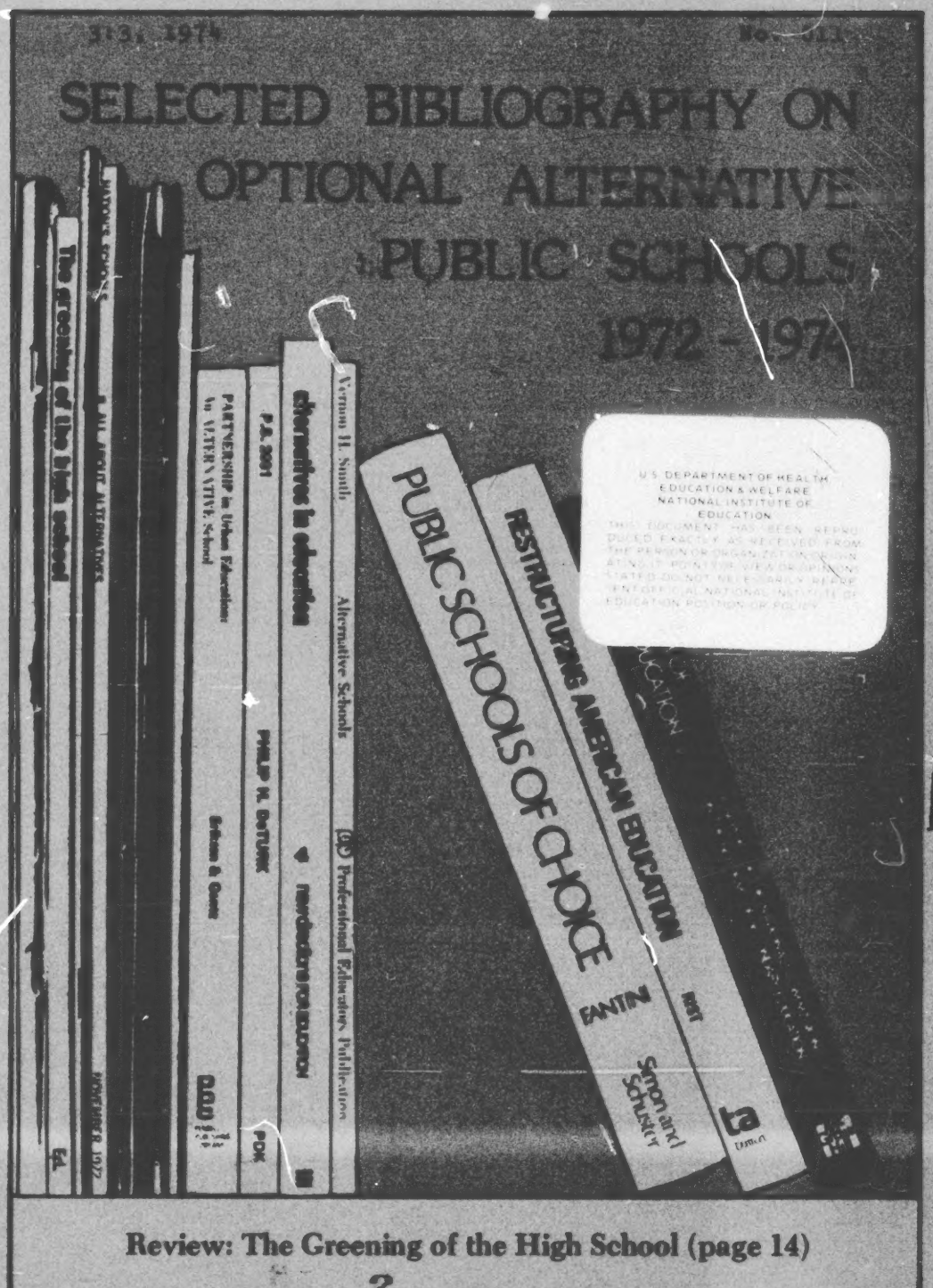
changing schools

An Occasional Newsletter on Alternative Public Schools



Review: The Greening of the High School (page 14)

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Options in Public Education

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From the editors:

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When we started *Changing Schools* in 1971, we felt that there was a dearth of information in print on the development of alternative public schools. That situation has changed dramatically. In preparing the bibliography in this issue, we had hundreds of items to consider (thousands if we include newspaper stories, which have been omitted from the bibliography). This burgeoning of publications on alternative public schools makes us wonder whether there is still a need for *Changing Schools*. Reactions from readers would be welcome.

* * *

Meanwhile, optional alternative public schools are increasing in number more rapidly than the literature about them. We confirmed the existence of over 500 alternative schools in 1972-73 before we published our first directory (*Changing Schools* #8 and 9). Recognizing the shortcomings of our information gathering procedures, we estimated that there were at least twice as many as we were able to verify, or over 1,000 in operation. Last year, 1973-74, we confirmed the existence of nearly a thousand alternative public schools and estimated at least two thousand in operation. While it is too early to report figures for 1974-75, our correspondence would indicate a geometric increase this year suggesting that there may be 4,000 or more alternative public schools in operation enrolling over 500,000 students. But remember, even if true, this is still only about one per cent of the students in elementary and secondary schools.

While we intend to continue to keep tabs on the development of optional public schools, the publication of a directory listing thousands of schools would be a major project requiring more resources than we have available.

* * *

Recently several school systems throughout the country have opened schools to which delinquent, disruptive, emotionally disturbed, or hyperactive students are assigned without choice. More and more these institutions are being labeled "alternative schools." Alternative means choice, not compulsion. Those concerned about optional public schools should join us in objecting to this inappropriate label and in clarifying the concept of alternative public schools.

* * *

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Plans are underway for the second convention of the International Consortium for Options in Public Education to be held in the Los Angeles area in fall, 1975. Your suggestions for the Convention program are welcome. Please send suggestions or inquiries to Dan Burke, Director, ICOPE Convention, School of Education 113, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

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Addenda

"Back to Basics in the Schools," *Newsweek*, October 21, 1974, pp. 87-95.

Starting with two alternative public schools in Pasadena, this superficial article ranges through educational reform, adult illiteracy, unemployment, and Dr. Spock.

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Chapman considers the value conflicts related to the development of optional public schools in Canada and suggests alternative schools for both the elementary and secondary levels.

Matters of Choice: A Ford Foundation Report on Alternative Schools. New York: The Ford Foundation, 1974.

Wirth, Arthur G. *Reflections on Alternative Schools*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974.

Wirth analyzes the current alternative school movement against the philosophic background of the progressive education of Dewey and Bode.

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Ruth Weinstock: *The Greening of the High School*
New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1973.
(Paperback $2.00)

Reviewed by Robert D. Barr

In an era when we seem to be all but inundated by a barrage of scholarly recommendations emanating from blue ribbon committees, national panels, professional commissions, study groups, and government investigations, it is indeed refreshing to pick up this document and find the provocative title, *The Greening of the High School* Even more exciting, is to find the report just as interesting and informative as its title suggests. *The Greening of the High School* is a report of a conference co-sponsored by the Educational Facilities Laboratories and the Institute for Development of Educational Activities in April, 1972.

To say the book is good is simply to employ too much scholarly reservation. More correctly, the book is excellent and absolutely must reading for all concerned educators. The book has something to say, and says it in a crisp manner that crackles with wit, fresh insights, and important information. You'll learn about the "Pass to Piss Regime" of most high schools, the only places in our society where kids are counted seven times a day. You'll read about the "dejuvenilization of youth" and learn that veneral disease has replaced chicken pox as the most prevalent childhood disease. Or have you ever thought about the relationship between "body time" and "school time," or considered how to better educate the "night people?" Or perhaps you haven't heard about the "high school without high school," or "5 O'Clock High School," or a school at a zoo? Well, it's all here plus illustrations, pictures, school designs and ideas for helping to make the high school "green."

Ruth Weinstock has done a superb job in writing this report. She seems to have the remarkable talent for cutting through and boiling down all the excessive jargon that so typifies conferences. She has spared us all that talk, and seems to have pulled out those really important tidbits and served them up in a delectable format. In one section entitled "The Young Aren't As Young As They Used To Be," she encapsulates on one page the major biological and social changes that have occurred in youth, a task that took James Coleman and the Panel on Youth over twenty pages to document. Another section on green pages describes a series of stimulating illustrations of alternative schools that are already well into the "greening" process. Finally, in a section called somewhat grandiosely, "All About Change," the report deals in staccato fashion with 12 major change issues ranging from legal constraints and finances to the need for new roles for teachers.

The thrust of the "greening" process, at least as it is summarized in this conference report, is to develop alternative schools that relate directly to the clients they serve. And since it can be documented that today's youth has changed ("...contemporary youth is as unlike the generations of youth that preceded it as Andy Hardy is

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from Abbie Hoffman"), and today's schools haven't changed, the question seems to come down to identifying ways of moving the school toward the place where kids are today. But the report goes far beyond renewing schools. Much of the discussion focuses on moving kids out of the classroom and out of the school to experiential learning activities in the community. The following issues, identified by Harold Howe, seem to summarize the conference but should not be taken (we are warned) as Howe's Ten Commandements. Rather they are offered as "ten general ideas for a new beginning for the high school."

1. Education is not something that takes place only inside a building called a school...Many youngsters will do better getting a large proportion of their education outside the institutions we have traditionally called school.

2. Schools must take a much enlarged responsibility for helping young people find jobs and significant volunteer opportunities that have real value to society during the secondary school years, and schools must give credit toward graduation for these activities.

3. The baby-sitting function of high schools should cease. There are no babies in them...

4. Student cooperation in learning should replace competition...

5. Every school system should have a plan for continuous and systematic in-service training for high school teachers and administrators...

6. Student participation in the planning of changes, as well as in the daily operation of high schools, should be stimulated, and students should get academic credit for effective participation.

7. Renewed efforts at bringing about associations between high school age students and people the age of their parents are worth trying...

8. Academic freedom of the kind that has been so jealously guarded by college professors should be extended to the high school, so that searching conversations on subjects of current interest can take place there...

9. The mastery of skills and important fundamental subjects like science, mathematics, foreign languages, and history should be set in a context that highlights the importance of these fields in today's world...

10. New categories of professional personnel will be needed as students spend more time away from school getting educated.

To summarize, I suggest you order a copy and settle down for some delightful reading.

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ICOPE REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Responses to the 1974 regional conferences sponsored by the International Consortium for Options in Public Education have been enthusiastic with large turnouts in San Diego, Charlotte (North Carolina), Berkeley, Portland, and Detroit. The final regional conference of the year is scheduled for Cincinnati, December 12-14. The 1975 regional conference schedule is partially complete. If your community would like to host an ICOPE conference in 1975, contact Dan Burke as soon as possible.

Regional Conference Schedule

Cincinnati — *December 12-14*
Cosponsor: Cincinnati Public Schools

Santa Cruz — *January 30 - February 1*
Cosponsor: Santa Cruz Public Schools

Chicago — *February, 1975*
"Metro's Fifth Birthday"

Waterloo, Iowa — *March 19-20*
Cosponsor: Waterloo Public Schools

Portland, Maine — *April, 1975*
Cosponsor: Portland Public Schools

For further information: ICOPE Regional Conferences
School of Education 113
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

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